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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
17 AIRGRAM

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TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 INFO : WARSAW
 SUBJECT : Initial Local Reactions to President's Quarantine Order
 FROM : Amconsul POTMAN
 DATE: October 25, 1962
 REF :
CONFIDENTIAL

During the week which followed the President's October 22 announcement of a quarantine of Cuba, local information media achieved a relatively smooth transition from initially bewildered silence, through vituperative incitement, to hailing Khrushchev's offer to withdraw missiles as an outstanding achievement for the forces of peace. Local panic buying, though present to a degree, has not been as pronounced as it was during the Berlin crisis last autumn. Evidences of local military activity have also been less than last year. However, there has been much heavier surveillance of Consulate personnel than at any time in the past, and uniformed police patrols in the vicinity of the Consulate have been increased noticeably, ostensibly to prevent incidents. Local citizens, while somewhat reluctant to discuss the Caribbean crisis appear to approve U.S. action, and U.S. firmness appears to have had a salutary effect here.

* * * * *

Information Media Develop and Adjust Nine - Information media of the consular district, as probably elsewhere in bloc countries, reacted to the President's October 22 quarantine speech slowly and cautiously, waiting for the line. On the radio the event gradually worked its way up from last position on news casts on October 23 to first position by Wednesday evening October 24.

On October 24 Poznan TV presented a twisted account of events leading up to the President's order, showed "protest" meetings throughout the

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October 30, 1962

"world" (nearly all of them containing London headlines), and followed this with a brief, completely distorted pictorial history of U.S. — its fight for independence, the U.S. "sell-out" to Batista, Castro and the July 26 movement, the Bay of Pigs and now the U.S. "interference with the peaceful traits" of Cuba.

On October 25 Gazeta Poznanska printed the Polish Government announcement, a vituperative unsigned editorial, and an article about protest meetings in Poznan Province. Taking its cue from the Government announcement, which depicted the U.S. action as illegally directed against the Cuban people rather than against the offensive Soviet weapons on the island, the Gazeta article is vitriolic, railing — rousing terms charged the U.S. with violations of international law and "playing with accusations, as if there were bases on Cuba with 'offensive' missile" of Soviet origin." It misrepresented Lippman's column of October 22, which pointed to our alleged vulnerability in Turkey, and claimed that Lipman shouted (in exuberance we doubt ever were shouted) on September 13: "Let us not be fools." The editorial endorsed Khrushchev's readiness to discuss matters at the highest level. It concluded with the unfortunate slogan: "Stop the field playing with fire!" A translation of the editorial is attached as Enclosure No. 1.

The Gazeta article on local developments enumerated the protests — large which have taken place among the principal industrial plants of Poznan and which workers passed resolutions on Cuba and Berlin. In its last of articles on the eve of the destructive demonstration against the Consulate on April 17, 1961, the article concluded: "We appeal to the work forces of all factories of the city of Poznan and Poznan Province to protest against the aggressive steps of the United States against Cuba and other peace-loving countries." This article was repeated in the less aggressive evening newspaper Express Poznanski on the same day, but without the concluding exhortation to protest quoted above.

During the days of crisis the local party press accomplished a fairly neat transition from incitement to face-saving reasonableness, with Khrushchev depicted as the central figure leading the world down the path to peaceful negotiation. On October 29 Gazeta Poznanska headlined Khrushchev's agreement to dismantle the Soviet missile bases with UN verification. This news was accompanied by an editorial (enclosure No. 3) which, taken together with the newspaper's initial treatment of the crisis (enclosure No. 1), clearly depicts the propaganda transition.

Poles Approve U.S. Actions but Reserved in Comments — The reaction of local citizens to the current situation in the Caribbean has been thus far very different from that observed at the outset of the Berlin crisis in August and September of 1961. At that time people were concerned but effusive in their comments. During the first days of the current crisis conscious efforts by members of the Consulate to solicit reactions proved relatively unsuccessful, although all queried appeared to approve U.S. action. Queries produced comments such as "I have been away all week and have heard very little" or "I hope nothing serious happens;" or — complete silence. This reticence seems to have arisen more from a reluctance to think about possible consequences than disinterest in developments. Local employees of the Consulate and other Poles who care to discuss the subject are well aware of the facts through VOA, BBC and other foreign broadcasts.

On the evening of October 28, immediately after the VOA broadcast describing the exchange of letters between Khrushchev and President Kennedy, a local Economics professor expressed joy to a member of the Consulate at the outcome. On the

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following morning, October 27, the local staff of the Consulate was aware of the terms of Khrushchev's agreement before the departing officer had a chance to brief them on developments. The local press on October 29 carried the texts of the letters exchanged by President Kennedy and Khrushchev.

Panic Buying Thus Far is Not Pronounced - Daily checks by members of the Consulate revealed no unusual lines in grocery or meat stores during the first three days (October 23-25) after the President's announcement and imposition of the quarantine. Thereafter purchasing of staples picked up considerably and stocks of salt and soap were exhausted by October 27. Other staples including flour and sugar remained on the shelf but were subjected to steady, heavy buying. Meat, mostly beef, remained available in the meat shops. Panic buying thus far has not reached the proportions it did last fall during the Berlin crisis.

Police Patrols and Surveillance of Consulate Compound - On October 23 day-time patrols of uniformed police were introduced into the compound of the Consulate, with one policeman telling the Consulate watchman that the local police commandant had assigned 20 men to special duty to assure that there would be no damage to or incidents involving the Consulate. On the 24th several service automobiles with crews of three plainclothesmen were stationed about the Consulate and the residence on Grodziska Street and have trailed Consulate persons at night and day since that time. A member of the Consulate who accompanied author Lure Leaf to Wroclaw indicated that this surveillance was also conducted in Wroclaw on October 27. Although surveillance of the Consulate is undoubtedly close at all times, this is the first time all members of the Consulate have been obviously followed wherever they went.

Local Military Activity Not Extraordinary - Evidences of military activity did not follow the same pattern as that of last year's Berlin crisis, when there was considerable evidence of such activity throughout the consular district. On October 27 a long Soviet convoy (130 vehicles) was observed heading south from Poznan toward Wroclaw. However, the Consulate has neither observed nor heard of unusual activity in local Polish installations, and a trip to Szczecin via Pila on October 28 revealed nothing unusual en route or in the city of Szczecin itself. Admittedly these conclusions are the result of casual observation, for constant "stalking" by local agents has caused members of the Consulate to be circumspect. However, this casual but regular observation by the Consulate indicates that thus far there has been less obvious military activity and talk of military activity than there was during the tense period following the construction of the wall in Berlin last year.

Comment - In spite of some reluctance to discuss the matter, the ordinary local citizen appears to be fairly well informed regarding current Caribbean developments and to welcome the apparent willingness of the Soviet Union to back down as a result of American firmness. Later discussion gave some indication Poles feel that the USSR will make every effort to exploit situations like those in Cuba and the Congo and will not shrink from the most fantastic adventures if they think they can get away with them. These Poles think however, that the present Soviet regime has too much at stake in preserving peace, has made too much peaceful industrial

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Re: -
Poland
October 16, 1962

and economic progress to permit such adventures to upset the apple cart. The Soviets may push to the limit, they say, but they also have the machinery and propaganda media to permit a reasonably smooth withdrawal under the cover of half-truths, misrepresentations and appearances of complete willingness to seek peaceful solutions through negotiation. This flip-flop technique, which appears to fool very few people in this part of Poland but takes care of the recetti, is partly illustrated in the enclosed newspaper selections.

The Consulate concludes that American firmness, in fact the entire experience, has had a salutary effect on local opinion.

Walter E. Perkins, Jr.
Walter E. Perkins, Jr.
American Consul

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Enclosures:

1. Translation from Gazeta Poznanska, October 25, 1962.
2. Translation from Gazeta Poznanska, October 25, 1962.
3. Translation from Gazeta Poznanska, October 29, 1962.

PUT AN END TO THE PROVOCATION

Consciously, coldly, the Government of the United States attempts to unleash an adventure, the consequence of which may be unpredictable. President Kennedy signed a proclamation ordering the armed forces of the US to surround Cuba with a ring of battle-ships and airplanes in order to introduce a blockade. Hence there occurred a brutal, disgraceful act violating elementary principles of the international law, principles of the coexistence of nations, and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Attempting to find a motive for this unprecedented step, a step which pushes the world to the brink of a "nuclear world war" — as President Kennedy calls it — himself in his Monday speech — the American leader plays with accusations as if there were on Cuba bases of "offensive" missiles of Soviet origin.

These formulations take on a particular aftertaste in the light of the text of the proclamation signed yesterday by the President of the USA. It is simply a matter of the "Marxist and Leninist regime on Cuba," the "expansion" of which the USA is ready to "prevent by all means which will be necessary, including the use of weapons." ... In other words it concerns Cuba's independence from the American capital. Independent Cuba rejects dictation from the USA.

Here is the crux of the matter! Cuba's offensive rockets are not missiles but ideas, and that's what American capitalism is afraid of; the President of the US admits it. It is the intention of the US to use the blockade around Cuba to prevent a further spreading of independent aspirations among countries of South America. What a confession of weakness!

As Western agencies report, the USA will not limit it to a blockade. Under this cover, preparations for an invasion are being made, the purpose of which would be the liquidation of the supposed Russian missile bases. One really cannot find many examples of such cynicism. Who possesses a base on Cuban territory? The USSR or the USA? And Guantanamo? Whose base is that? Just yesterday President Kennedy ordered its reinforcement by sending further divisions. President Kennedy accuses the USSR of bringing weapons to Cuba "secretly." Secretly? Every reader of world press, including that in Poland, was able to read on September 3, 1962 the communiqué about the visit of a Cuban delegation in Moscow and about talks, in which the USSR agreed to grant Cuba help in arming them with war materials for defensive purposes. The USA is questioning the USSR's right to help threatened Cuba, but they grant their own right to install offensive bases round the USSR and the socialist camp's frontiers. The nonsense of this position is so obvious, that the leading American columnist Lippman shouts (sic) in his article published on September 18, 1962 in New York Herald Tribune: "Let us not be fools!"

The world is more of a unit now than it used to be. Sputniks can circle it in a little more than one hour. The interdependence of peoples and problems in the extremities of this earth has increased tremendously. The Americans call it global

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war strategy. We call for a global strategy of peace.

The fight for peace increases in the whole world. The aroused African and Asian nations openly condemn the American's acts of provocation. The governments of neutral countries consult one another to demand the big powers to withhold any action which would threaten the peace. Large demonstrations in the countries of Latin America, whose governments — with reservations and under pressure — accepted USA's dictation. Hesitation and trepidation can be observed in the governing circles of the Atlantic Allies of America.

In this situation the declaration of Nikita Khrushchev in answer to the letter of old Bertrand Russell has great meaning. The Soviet Premier states that the "Soviet Government will make no unreasonable decision and will not let the USA provoke it with ill-advised acts." In this situation the Soviet Government thinks that a meeting at the highest level would be advantageous, but the American Government must discontinue its pirate threats which can have the most serious consequences.

The Polish nation has often manifested its solidarity with the Cuban nation. At this moment it expresses it more warmly than ever. With all the nations of the world we demand that the American provocation be ended. Stop the fools playing with fire.

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Enclosure No. 8 to Poznan A-41
Source: "Gazeta Poznanska",
October 25, 1962.

IR & N B L A T E R I E

The Workers of Poznan Province (Wielkopolska) Protest Against the U.S. Provocations

Ones' press recall made no mention of the protest of the Poznan workers against the United States' illegal actions against Cuba. The workers of Poznan and the province protest against the provocations of the U.S.A. against Cuba.

In connection with the declaration of the Soviet Government published yesterday and drawing attention to the aggressive steps of the United States Government against Cuba — there were mass meetings of workers in many establishments of Poznan city and in the province during which protests were lodged against the threats and provocations of the U.S.A. against the Cuban Republic. In the afternoon hours there were protest meetings in the largest industrial establishments of Poznan — at the H. Cegielski Factory — branch N-6, at "Pomet", "Klepofama" and at the "Zaklady Naprawcze Taboru Kolejowego" at Ostrow and the "Zaklady Przemyslu Lezajskiego" (a plant of the Knitting Industry) at Maliszew. By means of numerous public gatherings the workmen disapproved of the actions of the U.S.A. imperialistic circles — affecting the basic principles of sovereignty and neutrality stopping at the violation of the United Nations Charter. In their resolutions the workers most strongly oppose the illegal and willful actions applied by the U.S.A. against the heroic Cuban people, and are condemning particularly the steps taken with intention of isolating Cuba; and they express their protest against the imperialistic policy of the U.S.A. which causes also trouble spots in Europe, of which the transaction of Berlin into a focus of spying and provocation is a proof. The Poznan workers demand an end to illegal actions against Cuba and call for the signing of a peace treaty with Germany.

The crew of the Gas Works of the Poznan District (Zaklady Gazownictwa Okregu Poznanskiego) also issued a protest resolution in connection with the provocative action of the U.S.A. Government. Inter alia we read in this document:

These aggressive steps of the U.S.A., without precedent, which are limiting the trade with free Cuba, are setting back the development of the young democratic country, are contradictory to international law and contradictory to the United Nations Organization Charter, are condemned with full determination by the crew of the "Zaklady Gazownictwa Okregu Poznanskiego."

We appeal to the work forces of all factories of the city of Poznan and Poznan Province to protest against the aggressive steps of the United States against Cuba and other peace-loving countries.

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Enclosure No. 3 to Report A-41
Source: "Gazeta Polonica,"
October 29, 1962.

TRANSLATION

Our Commentary

THE VICTORY OF PEACE

The sense of great events is best expressed by simple words. Let us therefore not look for unusual definitions to say what the day October 26, 1962 has brought. It is sufficient to say, this is a great victory of peace.

During several dramatic days the world experienced the most serious international crisis in post-war times which was caused by the provocative moves of the American policy. Today, when the crisis took a course towards reconciliation, we can once again think over the course of events, which was a particularly visible confirmation of the fact that the defense of peace is the principal theme of Soviet policy. The blockade of Cuba carried out by the USA was an open violation of the basic principles of international law, an opinion also clearly expressed by many Western politicians. The illegality of the blockade was especially evident in connection with the fact that it was carried out by a country which has surrounded the USSR with a net of aggressive military bases during the whole post war period. Consequently, what a demonstration of a feeling of responsibility for the destiny of the world the USSR has given by putting forward the idea of negotiating under conditions where the responsibility for the dangerous development of events would be borne by the USA exclusively.

Peace victory...

The point is, that we are celebrating today a day of victory in the fight for peace as a result of the attitude of a socialist power! The hope of the whole peaceful opinion of the world, the concern for which was reflected by the aged British philosopher Bertrand Russell, was directed to the capital city of the USSR, from which emanated nearly every day successive suggestions for a peaceful settlement. The action of saving peace undertaken by the USSR, which enjoyed the support of the countries of the "third world" and broad political circles in the Western countries, resulted in U.S. Agreement to renounce the blockade of Cuba and to give up the aggressive plans against that country. At the same time the USSR will withdraw weapons which President Kennedy considers as "offensive."

In the victory of world peace there is also the victory of the fight of the Cuban people to maintain their independence which was threatened by the USA. As it is well-known, the aim of American policy was the liquidation of the revolutionary regime on Cuba, a reflection of which is the fact that already in April 1961 an invasion against Cuba was undertaken from the territory of the USA, long before the time when there were installed weapons defined by the USA as offensive. Now the United States must restrain its aggressive intentions and states that other countries from the Western Hemisphere will proceed in a similar way.

With regard to the USSR, it has shown once more by withdrawing its weapons from Cuba that they were to be used to ascertain Cuba's defense exclusively.

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Forman A-41

A day of victory of peace -- many facts would indicate that this statement must be hedged with reservations. Premier Khrushchev recalls among other things in his letter the provocative flights of U.S. airplanes over the territory of the USSR and states at the same time that the renunciation of an aggressive policy against Cuba by the United States will have to be expressed by deeds and not in words. However, the avoidance of the explosive situation and also the fact that the peaceful suggestions of the Soviet Union have paved the way for talks on the whole relationship between East and West, including for instance such principles as ending experiments with nuclear weapons, again awakens the hopes of mankind.

N.Z.

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